The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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Deacon Sniffles Speaks Out.

No, sir, you needn't be pokin'
Any your nonsense at me, because
You see I'm a reg'lar "Hard Shell," "
And terribly sot in my ways.

These new-fangled notions and fixins
'Bout larning, nnd progress, and sich,
Are wicked and very annoyin',
To the saints, of whom I am which.

I don't believe in your organs,
And note-books, and foolish whims;
They bother and sorter confuse me,
In singin' the old-fashioned hymns.

And then this new style of sermon
Is awfully tryin' to me;
There's nothin' in them 'bout election,
And God's eternal decree.

But instid of these blessed doctrines,
They tell an onreasonable story,
'Bout prayin', and payin', and doin',
And fightin' your way to glory.

I don't so much mind the prayin',
Or, in fact, an occasional shout;
But this idea of workin' and payin',
Is the thing that puts me out.

But what is badder than all this,
And's doin' us far greater harm,
Is this new-fangled Sunday-School teachin',
That's takin' the world by storm.

With their "texts," and "topics," an' "outlines,"
And "blackboard," and "Lesson Papers,"
They've turned their backs on the Scripters,
And are cuttin' up pretty capers.

But I've lifted my voice agin it,
To make them their error to see,
And if it should lead them to ruin,
They never can lay it on me. *Little Watchman.*

"Fear not the windy tempest wild,
Thy bark they shall not wreck;
Lie down and sleep, thou helpless child,
Thy 'Father's on the deck.'"

For the Myrtle.

The Story of a Grain of Rye.

A WOMAN stood by the fire holding in her hand a a time-worn bonnet.

"It is good for nothing," said she, "and yet I hardly like to burn it:" turning away from the bright blaze she replaced it in a covered box, and went on with her work, never stopping to think of the story of a grain of rye, that had lent its aid in forming that covering for the head.

Hundreds of little people do not know what a grain of rye can have to do with a lady's bonnet, and for them I write this little story.

"Once upon a time" there lived in a wide old house beside the sea, a family consisting of a man and his wife and five children. One of the little girls—there were two of them—was not strong and well. Little Katie used to sit for hours and watch the old ocean; and in its rush and roar she heard music; and it was like a companion to her.

The three boys were older than their sisters; already they had learned to swim like ducks, and could be trusted alone upon the water, in their small boats. "If I continue to live here" said the father, "the ocean will bewitch my boys; they will grow up to think 'a home on the rolling deep' the only home for them. I will move inland."

After weeks spent in the search, the father purchased a farm with a snug little house and

barn upon it. The house had been built in the midst of an immense oak grove. A few rods to the north of the house a beautiful grove still stood; but the remainder of the trees had been hewn down, the stumps torn up and the ground made fit to plough and plant.

Very soon the family were settled in their new quarters.

One day the father went away from home and returned with a large bag full of small, brown grains of rye.

"Come boys," said he, "October is here: before it is gone we must sow the field between the barn and grove to winter rye." All the little grains of rye heard him speak and one said, "what does he mean by that? I never heard of winter rye."

"He means that we are to be put into the ground *now*, to have the cold winter winds blow over us, and like enough be frozen to death," replied its nearest neighbor peevishly. "I don't see why we can't be spring rye, and be planted when the sun shines warm, and the birds are singing," put in another in a complaining tone.

The first speaker remained silent: but he determined, no matter what came, to try to be very brave and true.

All in good time the rye was evenly sown over the mellow ground, made ready to receive it. The sun shone so brightly upon the earth, that the small grains of rye, each of them sent up into its light a bright green shoot. Then the cold winds came and they trembled at their harshness. But the friendly grove did all in its power to shield the tiny shoots from the wintry blasts; by and by the snow fell lightly upon them, and beneath its warm mantle they fell asleep to awaken one lovely morning in early spring, to hear the birds singing gayly, to feel the grateful warmth of the sun, and to find themselves the stronger, for having endured some hardships.

Then did the little grain of rye look around him, and he grew quite disheartened at what he saw.

"With those tall oaks one side of me, and that great house the other side I must always appear a nobody," thought he. Then remembering his resolve to be very brave and true he took heart again and set to work in good earnest, sending little rootlets out in search of the best nourishment to be found for his waving green plume; and so stimulated were his immediate neighbors by his example that that corner of the grain field was soon head and shoulders taller than the rest. Little Katie sat and watched the swaying grain as she used to watch the restless ocean; one day she said to her father "It is nearly as beautiful to look upon as is the sea." And her father, replied, "It is a noble field of grain: this corner has grown so quickly I shall cut it for braiding straw instead of leaving it for the grain to ripen."

Accordingly one bright morning the reapers came and cut down the tall rye straws and laid them in little bunches upon the ground; and behind the reapers came the binders and they fastened the bunches of straw securely together.

After the binders came a boy with a horse and wagon; into the wagon he gathered the bound bundles of straw, and the two little sisters climbed in to crown his load, and a merry drive they had to a large, clear field where several men and boys were at work. In one corner of the field, a rude fire-place was made in such a manner that the stones of it upheld a huge, black, box-like boiler, long enough to receive a bundle of straw. This was filled with boiling water. The farmer stood beside it and with a pitchfork carefully lifted the straw, bundle by bundle, and dipped it into the bubbling water and then placed it upon wheelbarrows; little boys ran with them to another part of the field when the spreaders were at work. The straw was then spread very evenly upon the ground, to whiten. It took two or three days to bleach it sufficiently and it was turned once every day in the time. Then it was again gathered into bundles and stowed in the loft of the barn, until the braiders should call for it.

One day a fair young girl came to buy some straw. "It is very soft and white," she said; and she took home a bundle with her. Then with nimble fingers she "cut out" the smooth pieces of straw, and having bleached them with a pointed knife she split open the straws one by one, and "machined" them, that is, she drew each one through a machine, which divided it into fine strips of equal width; Then she began to plait the little straws very nicely into a narrow braid which she sewed into the bonnet that she wore when she was wed; and that is why in after years she could not feel like burning the old, yellow bonnet.

Now I have told you how a wee grain of rye helped to do some good in the world. I have

only a little moral to add. We cannot all be tall oaks—presidents or president's wives—but not one of us is so insignificant but what we can do some good in the world, and make some one the happier for our having lived.

H. H. D.

Toddling up the Hill.

TODDLING up the hill, Willie,
Striving all you can,
Looking high above your head,
Quite the little man,
Peace for Pussy now, Willie,
Rest for top and ball;
Toddling up the hill, Willie,
You forget them all.

Toddling up the hill, Willie,
Laughing as you go,
Leaving childhood's sunny ways,
In the vale below,
Should you reach the top, Willie,
Should you scale the height,
I wonder if your heart, Willie,
Then will beat as light.

Toddling up the hill, Willie,
Oh my blessed boy,
Will the height to which you climb,
Yield you higher joy?
Will you wiser be, Willie,
Better, or as good?
Will you walk through all, Willie,
In the paths you should?

Toddling up the hill, Willie,
We can only smile
At the odd and funny ways,
Though we weep the while:
Dream all sorts of dreams, Willie,
Breathe an inward prayer,
With the hope that He will
Hold you in His care.

Toddling up the hill, Willie,
While we totter down,
Passing from the sun to where
Evening shadows frown,
As you higher climb, Willie,
May you understand,
Higher far than life, Willie,
Lies the promised land.

Chatterbox.

The Story of Jesus.

"The story of Jesus," said an African, "is my hymn, my prayer, my Bible. I weep over it wpen I can't sing about it, and I sing over it when I can't weep about it. This is true, that I thank God for it from the sole of my foot to the top of my head." Is the Christian child, who enjoys the benefits of a Christian land, as thankful for the blessing of a precious Saviour as that poor African?

The Well-Spring.

The Crows.

Caw-caw-caw. That's a crow talking. Some say you can teach a tame crow to say a few words. I should think you might. For this sounds as if he tried to say corn-corn-corn.

They flap their wings and fly close by us. You think they want their breakfast? Ah! they had that long ago. You and I were not up then. They had some meat and corn.

Where do they get meat? They find some worms, out in the field. Some men think they just dig up corn. They do that. But they eat worms too. So they do good, for the worms would eat the corn when it gets large, and kill it.

Once a man had a tame crow. The crow stayed with him a good while, but one day he went off. The man did not know where he was, but thought some one had shot him.

He did not see him for a year. Then he came back with some other crows. The man who owned him stood on the bank of a stream.

The crow left the flock and flew down to this man. What did the crow say? "I'm glad to see you, sir," was what he wanted to say. He was glad to see the man who had been good to him.

The man tried to take hold of the crow, but the crow would not be caught. He looked up and saw the rest of the crows and he flew off with them. They did not see him again.

May-be his mate was with the other crows, and they had made a nest up in some high tree.

What do they make a nest out of? Oh! they find a few thin bits of bark and some sticks, and some moss. Sometimes they stick these things together with mud. Then they fly off and hunt up some horse-hair or wool to line it with. That makes it warm for the eggs.

How many eggs are there? Four. They are pale green, with marks on them.

You think they must be pretty? Well, they are. The crows have gone out of sight now. But they or some more will be back before long with their caw-caw-caw. Then you must think of what I have told you.

The Bright Side and Family Circle.

A SMALL boy arose at a Sunday School concert, and began quite glibly: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell—and fell." Here his memory failed him. "And —fell by the roadside, and thorns sprang up and choked him."

For the Myrtle.

How to Have an Infant Class.

"BUT we can't have an Infant Class," said the teachers of the little school at Centerville, when they had their weekly meeting. "It's all well enough to talk about an infant class in city school where they have separate rooms, and can fit up a little room on purpose with pictures and everything, and let the children sing their little songs all to themselves. But what can we do with thirty or forty little children here, right in the body of the church? We *can't have* an Infant Class. So what good will all these lessons for little ones do us?"

"Oh, *can't* we have an Infant Class?" said the pastor's wife with her silvery laugh. "Where there's a will, there's a way. Will you let me try it?"

They were all willing she should try it, but what idea she had got in her ingenious little head they didn't know.

The next Sunday nothing was seen of the pastor's wife or her class. The teachers looked at each other in surprise. But soon a little buzzing and tittering was heard overhead. And looking up, behold there they saw the Infant Class in the high gallery, looking down on the heads of the rest of the school. The pastor's wife had a bright thought, surely!

It was not many Sundays before that little gallery became as full as it could hold. Little children from other Sunday Schools came to this for the sake of getting into that famous Infant Class. The gallery was fitted up with charts and object lessons and pictures; little picture-papers and hymns and cards came for these children each Sunday, they had their own special blackboard and their own little lessons—always learned.

Their singing disturbed the rest of the school, so they could not sing as much as their teacher wished, at first. But she thought a way out of that trouble. The church was low and old-fashioned and the ceiling was not far above the top of the gallery. So she had a set of doors made that would unfold and shut the gallery off in a little room by itself, and then the children could sing to their hearts' content. These doors were left open until after the opening exercises; then the superintendent went and closed them, and all you heard of the Infant Class was the muffled sound of reciting and singing.

This little gallery room was found also to make a convenient place for the evening conference meeting. And the plan of separate rooms worked so well that the Bible class took the church vestibule for their room, going out into it for their lesson and returning into the church for the general exercises. And the Bible class became twice as large and twice as good for the change.

I went to this Sunday School once, last summer, and saw this Infant Class in their gallery room with folding doors, and I thought then I would tell the readers of the MYRTLE about it. So they may be sure it is a true story.

Do not wait for a vestry before you can have a model Sunday School. Remember the motto the pastor's wife acted upon. Where there's a will there's a way. *H. A. B.*

"I HAVE given my tongue to God," said a little boy: "so I must take care how I use it."

For the Myrtle.

Little White-Star.

LITTLE White-Star's mother's name was Chaddy. Chaddy was a red and white Durham bossy, so called because she was bought from a man whose name was Chadwick. She was a calf of a few weeks old when she came home to us, and we had to "bring her up by hand" as the farmers called it.

Ah, the fun we had teaching Chaddy to drink! Her small nose would be in and out of the pail, flirting the milk around and tipping the pail over, and only by holding the pail firm with one hand and her head with the other could she be persuaded to give herself any dinner. But soon she had the pail and its meaning well learned, and she would frisk to the bars of her little pasture and thrust her nose through and call, whenever she saw it coming. We children used to quarrel, almost, over which should feed Chaddy; and we called it that she belonged to us all.

But when Chaddy came to be a young heifer, turned out into the field with the other cattle, her

love for a pail was not always so pleasant. She never became quite weaned from it but would start for a pail of any kind whenever it appeared. She drank the sap from the buckets at the maple trees in sugar-time; and if the men carried a luncheon-pail into the field at their work Chaddy was sure to spy it, and woe to their luncheon.

I remember how we laughed, one time, when a prim old maiden lady went after raspberries down in the pasture where Chaddy was kept, and after picking her five quart pail full of berries, left it on a stump and went on picking in a smaller dish, and Chaddy browzing around the stump, spied the pail, and supposing of course it was set there for her, ate every berry clean out of it.

But it was of White-Star, I was going to write. White-Star was Chaddy's first calf; and the white spots that mottled Chaddy's sides went all over White-Star; she was as white as snow. Then the white hairs quirled around in the centre of her face and made a star, and that was what gave her her name; and she had great soft brown eyes like Chaddy's. When she was first let out of the stable into the little garden-pasture where the calves were kept, and we saw her standing knee-deep in the green grass close by Chaddy's side, we thought there never was such a pretty little creature as White-Star.

But who should she belong to? Chaddy had belonged to us all, but we thought White-Star ought to be given to some one in particular. I wanted her so very much that I did not dare say anything about it. The boys had colts and calves and lambs and turkeys, and nothing out of doors bigger than a chicken had ever been given to me. And we never had had a *white* calf before. Oh, how I wanted White-Star!

Father said White-Star was his, and he should have to dispose of her. But he said it so good-naturedly that we all took courage.

One day after dinner he "spoke out," to me as I was washing the dishes. "Do you suppose, if we take the white calf away from Chaddy, you could feed her three times a day?"

"Oh yes, father!" I cried.

"And never forget her once?"

"I dont believe I should. I couldn't forget her if I tried."

"Well, if you'll do that, you may have the white calf for your own." "I hate white calves,' added father in a way to make me think he was not so very generous.

But I understood him, and he got thanked to his satisfaction. So White-Star was my very own; and the boys said they knew I was going to have her all the time, to pay for taking care of Chaddy so much. I brought her up on the pail as Chaddy had been before her, and I don't think her dinner was ever once forgotten.

H. A. B.

Eating Bread and Milk.

The daintiest, prettiest picture
'Twas ever my lot to see
Was one of four beautiful children,
On a door-step *vis a vis*.
With eyes as bright as diamonds,
And hair as soft as silk,
Out of an old-fashioned porringer,
Eating bread and milk.

In the background, near the door,
Sits the father and the mother,
And when the laugh goes 'round,
They glance at one another.
What need is there for speech,
The eye so much has said.
As they watch the little children
Eating milk and bread.

The household pet, old Bounce,
Is sleeping in the clover,
And in his dreams again
The hunt he's living over.
Whene'er the spoons click on the dish
He lifts his shaggy head,
And seems to say, I envy you,
Your sweet new mi k and bread.

Through the trees, the low sun-shadows
Were shifting here and there,
Lighting up each winsome face,
With beauty almost rare;
While the tired birds come trooping
To their leaf cots overhead,
Softly twittering, good-night,
To the girls with milk and bread.

What artist hand can catch
The smile-light coming, going;
Or tint the restless tresses
On the dimpled shouldres flowing;
Or give the arching lip
So fine a shade of red,
As it takes a drop of milk
And then a bit of bread.

Oh, happy little dreamers!
Upon the doorstone step,
No shade of care has crossed
Their sunny path as yet.
Oh, would their lives might ever be
So free from care and dread
As now while twilight gathers,
Eating milk and bread.

The Bright Side.

HATRED stirreth up strifes; but love covereth all sins.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—The Sunday School in South Boston held anniversary exercises in the church on Sunday evening, and the attendance was all that the seats could accommodate. The children sang, much to the general edification. Remarks were then offered by Col. A. J. Wright, Col. Henry W. Wilson, Charles Caverly, Jr., Rev. C. R. Moor, Hon. Charles J. Noyes and others. The statistics, numeral and financial, of the school were given in the reports of the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Charles L. Bird, of which the following are abstracts: The Treasurer's report shows aggregate cash receipts of $730.15, and expenditures of $670.13; cash on hand $60.02. The Secretary's report shows an average attendance of 177 per week, the total membership being 265; percentage of average attendance 60. The largest attendance was 213. There have been 11 Sundays when the attendance was 200 and over, and but one when the attendance was less than 100. There are 32 classes, 34 officers and teachers, and 231 scholars. The teachers have held eleven regular and two special business meetings, and thirty-six preparatory meetings. Five exhibitions have been given, including one anniversary, two by the infant class, one picnic, one levee, the annual Christmas festival and ten evening concerts. The property of the School is valued at about $2500. The library has been refitted at a cost of $106, and a large number of new books added. The total number of volumes is now 700. The infant class numbers 59, the children being under eight years of age. One officer and two children have died during the year. The School is very prosperous, and its friends have reason to feel gratified with the work it is accomplishing.

—The Sunday School in Tyngsboro lately held its fourth anniversary, the exercises consisting partly of singing, speaking, and Bible recitations by members of the school. The superintendents report showed a membership of 45 pupils with five officers and six teachers. The School is in fine working order, has a library and gives monthly concerts to great satisfaction. A liberal club of the MYRTLE is taken, and will be continued, one of the reasons being, as our lady informant says, that they select a good many of their pieces for concerts from the MYRTLE. We will bear this in mind hereafter, in the make-up of our paper.

—We were entertained listeners at a late concert of the Highlands School, where the recitations were all by small children. We recognized many things from our paper among the selections, and said then "we must bear in mind all these little speakers, and provide at least *one* thing for their wants every week." Look on the first page for it this time.

CONNECTICUT.

—In Norwich they have a Bible class of fifty members. They use the *Helper* lessons and find that they waken much interest.

—The Sunday School at Stafford loses a valuable member in the death of Mrs. Dimock, who has been a member of that School from early childhood.

OHIO.

—A friend writes us, "A Sunday School was organized at Union City on the first Sunday of May, under very hopeful auspicies." A Sunday School paper is wanted there, and I have recommended the MYRTLE. We send our congratulations to the School and our thanks to the mutual friend who introduces us to it. We hope to be better acquainted hereafter.

In General.

What can be done by Sunday Schools and in small ways for home missionary work may be seen from these two facts. First, the *Well-Spring*, the Congregational Sunday School paper, gives the missionary work of their Sunday School Publishing Society for the last three months, as follows:

"The Society made, the first three months of the year, about two hundred donations of books and *Well-Springs*—in all, over three thousand six hundred dollars—in more than twenty different States and Territories. Some of these donations contained libraries for six or eight different schools. Many of these donations were to aid in starting *new* schools, and the rest for reviving and sustaining such as could not be continued with success without such help."

Then the *Christian Union* gives the following item of a one cent mission:

'Over twenty five hundred dollars were contributed to the treasury of the Home Missionary Society last year from the Woman's One Cent Societies of the New Hampshire churches. Some $6,000 have already been raised from this source, the interest of which goes to aid needy congregations in the State. Are these not examples for us?"

—The Chinese Sunday School connected with the Third Congregational Church of San Francisco has an average attendance of between thirty and forty scholars, who, during the past year, have made very perceptible progress. This church, of which Rev. E. P. Barker is acting as pastor, is located outside of the city, and is not large in numbers, but it evidently is in full sympathy with the work of Chinese evangelization, as it has five Chinamen among its members, and a Chinese evening school in its vestry, besides the Sabbath School.

Indianapolis had a glorious Sunday School celebration on the 6th inst., their semi-centennial anniversary. The schools of the several denominations joined together to hold a grand meeting in the Academy of Music, but before the services commenced the hall was crowded with from three to four thousand children, and as many more waited outside. The Presbyterian church opposite was thrown open and filled up immediately, and then a Methodist church was brought into requisition, and that was packed. Altogether it was a great occasion; the multitudes, speeches, and singing combined to make the afternoon inspiring.

The Providence Institute.

The Sunday School Institute was held in Providence as appointed, and a very enjoyable meeting it was. All the essays, whose topics we gave in the programme, were read by their authors, and all were wide awake, practical, and full of the spirit of true work in the Sunday School. Through the whole Institute the One Lesson System of instruction was taken for granted, and the directions for teaching and for the conduct of the Schools were given on this basis. May the day be hastened when this method shall prevail in all our Schools! Preparations are being made for an Institute in Boston in September, and one in New York in October. They may well be attended not only by all teachers in Sunday School's but by all who ever expect to become such, and by all older scholars.

——"That sermon did me good!" Did it humble your heart, increase your hatred to sin, bring you upon your knees before God, fill you with gratitude, or make you ashamed of yourself and your ways? If it produces none of these effects, you are deceived; it may have pleased you, but it did not profit you; nature loves to be pleased, grace to be profited.

Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON IX — ANDREW.

Question. — Whose brother was Andrew?

Answer. — John i. 40.

Q. — Who called Andrew's attention to Christ?

A. — John i. 37, 40.

Q. — Whose disciple was Andrew before he followed Jesus?

A. — John i. 35.

Q. — In what way did Andrew become acquainted with Jesus?

A. — John i. 38, 39.

Q. — When he requested his brother, Simon Peter, to come to Jesus, what did he say to him of Christ?

A. — John i. 41.

Q. — When Jesus inquired how much food they had, when he fed the five thousand, who pointed out the lad with the bread and fishes?

A. — John vi. 8, 9.

Q. — When the Greeks wished to see Jesus, to whom did they make their request known?

A. — John xii. 20, 21.

NOTE. Philip and Andrew are Greek names; and possibly it was the Greek name of Philip which led the Greeks to make the request to see Jesus, to him. And it must be distinctly remembered, that the Jews supposed that the Messiah would come for their nation only, and that it was a surprise that Greeks should wish to see a Jewish ruler, as they thought him to be.

Q. — To whom did Philip state the request of the Greeks?

A. — John xii. 22.

Q. — Who informed Jesus of the request?

A. — John xii. 22.

Q. — What grand prophecy did Jesus utter when told that Greeks wished to see him?

A. — John xii. 32.

NOTE. The above are nearly all the particulars that have been preserved to us of Andrew. But they are enough to show us that he was a man of devotion to the truth and of large and generous heart.

——Sincerity is to speak as we think, to do as we pretend and profess, to perform and to make good what we promise, and really to be what we would seem and appear to be.

Hidden Seed

Enigma No. 1.

I am composed of 15 letters.

My 13, 15, 11, 15, was a prophet of the Lord.

My 4, 5, 14, 3, 8, 12 was greatly impoverished by the Midianites.

My 5, 7, 2, 4, 3 was a land over which Rezin was king.

My 12, 3, 4, 5, 10 a city which was afterwards called Dan.

My 1, 11, 9, 6, 14 was one of the disciples.

My 10, 13, 2 was the mount upon which Aaron died.

My whole is an expression used in the Psalms. M.

Enigma No. 2.

I am composed of 23 letters.

My 1, 18, 3, 18, 17, 2, 18, 23, was a Jewish highpriest.

My 2, 9, 21, 11, 13, was fround in the skeleton of a lion.

My 7, 23, 22, 2, 20, 19, is a book in the Old Testament.

My 23, 18, 15, 4, was a king.

My 18, 10, 3, 7, 4, was the grandfather of Saul.

My 11, 8, 5, 14, 6, was a town in Galilee.

My 22, 2, 12, 18, 22, 3, 16, 18, was the city of Lydia.

My whole is a command given to all. M. B.

Enigma No. 3.

I am composed of 32, letters.

My 10, 5, 32, 13, 3, 18, is a parent.

My 9, 16, 17, 14, 15, is what all Christians are.

My 6, 3, 30, 7, 14, 18, is what scholars study.

My 23, 26, 31, 30, is a girl's name.

My 4, 23, 10, 15, is a common noun.

My 15, 17, 26, is used common.

My 29, 8, 21, 19, 27, 29, is a part of a house.

My 12, 24, 23, 28, 3, is used in school.

My 11, 14, 30, means yes.

My 25, 14, 29, 8, 21, 1, 5, 31, is a proper noun.

My 2, 3, 10, is woman's work.

My 22, 23, 20, 18, is what all have.

My whole are words of the Psalmist.

Answer.

May 24. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though hr were dead, yet shall he live."

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